

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

ROBERT O'NEIL,

Plaintiff,

- against -

ASSOCIATED NEWSPAPERS (U.S.A.) LIMITED

Defendant.

Docket No. 1:18-cv-10186

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

COMPLAINT

Plaintiff Robert O'Neil ("O'Neil" or "Plaintiff") by and through his undersigned counsel, as and for his Complaint against Defendant Associated Newspapers (U.S.A.) Limited ("Associated Newspapers" or "Defendant") hereby alleges as follows:

NATURE OF THE ACTION

1. This is an action for copyright infringement under Section 501 of the Copyright Act. This action arises out of Defendant's unauthorized reproduction and public display of a copyrighted photograph of singer and songwriter Zayn Malik, owned and registered by O'Neil, a New York based professional photographer. Accordingly, O'Neil seeks monetary relief under the Copyright Act of the United States, as amended, 17 U.S.C. § 101 *et seq.*

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

2. This claim arises under the Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C. § 101 *et seq.*, and this Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1338(a).

3. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant because Defendant resides in and/or transacts business in New York.

4. Venue is proper in this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b).

PARTIES

5. O'Neil is a professional photographer in the business of licensing his photographs to online and print media for a fee having a usual place of business at 10-01 162 Street Apartment 7B, Whitestone, NY 11357.

6. Upon information and belief, Associated Newspapers is a foreign business corporation duly organized with a place of business 51 Astor Place, New York, NY 10003. Upon information and belief Associated Newspapers is registered with the New York Department of State Division of Corporations to do business in the State of New York. At all times material, hereto, Associated Newspapers has owned and operated a website at the URL: www.dailymail.co.uk (the "Website").

STATEMENT OF FACTS

A. Background and Plaintiff's Ownership of the Photograph

7. O'Neil photographed singer and songwriter Zayn Malik (the "Photograph"). A true and correct copy of the Photograph is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

8. O'Neil is the author of the Photograph and has at all times been the sole owner of all right, title and interest in and to the Photograph, including the copyright thereto.

9. The Photograph was registered with the United States Copyright Office and was given registration number VA 2-121-470 and titled "6.28.18.Zayn Malik062818_11. ONeil.jpg." See Exhibit B.

B. Defendant's Infringing Activities

10. On or about June 29, 2018, Associated Newspapers ran an article on the Website titled *Zayn Malik debuts new silver and blue hair color while stepping out in New York City*. See URL <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-5899567/Zayn-Malik-debuts-new-silver->

blue-hair-color-stepping-New-York-City.html. The article prominently featured the Photograph. A true and correct copy of the article and a screenshot of the Photograph on the article are attached hereto as Exhibit C.

11. Associated Newspapers did not license the Photograph from Plaintiff for its article, nor did Associated Newspapers have Plaintiff's permission or consent to publish the Photograph on its Website.

CLAIM FOR RELIEF
(COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT AGAINST DEFENDANT)
(17 U.S.C. §§ 106, 501)

12. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each and every allegation contained in Paragraphs 1-11 above.

13. Associated Newspapers infringed Plaintiff's copyright in the Photograph by reproducing and publicly displaying the Photograph on the Website. Associated Newspapers is not, and has never been, licensed or otherwise authorized to reproduce, publically display, distribute and/or use the Photograph.

14. The acts of Defendant complained of herein constitute infringement of Plaintiff's copyright and exclusive rights under copyright in violation of Sections 106 and 501 of the Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C. §§ 106 and 501.

15. Upon information and belief, the foregoing acts of infringement by Defendant have been willful, intentional, and purposeful, in disregard of and indifference to Plaintiff's rights.

16. As a direct and proximate cause of the infringement by the Defendant of Plaintiff's copyright and exclusive rights under copyright, Plaintiff is entitled to damages and Defendant's profits pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504(b) for the infringement.

17. Alternatively, Plaintiff is entitled to statutory damages up to \$150,000 per work infringed for Defendant's willful infringement of the Photograph, pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504(c).

18. Plaintiff further is entitled to his attorney's fees and full costs pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 505.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests judgment as follows:

1. That Defendant Associated Newspapers be adjudged to have infringed upon Plaintiff's copyrights in the Photograph in violation of 17 U.S.C §§ 106 and 501;
2. That Plaintiff be awarded either: a) Plaintiff's actual damages and Defendant's profits, gains or advantages of any kind attributable to Defendant's infringement of Plaintiff's Photograph; or b) alternatively, statutory damages of up to \$150,000 per copyrighted work infringed pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504;
3. That Defendant be required to account for all profits, income, receipts, or other benefits derived by Defendant as a result of its unlawful conduct;
4. That Plaintiff be awarded his costs, expenses and attorneys' fees pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 505;
5. That Plaintiff be awarded pre-judgment interest; and
6. Such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury on all issues so triable in accordance with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 38(b).

Dated: Valley Stream, New York
November 1, 2018

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